



**Nebraska Head Start-State
Collaboration Office
Quarterly Report # 34**

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Outcome: Head Start and State Agencies have solid connections and positive working relationships to promote and enhance early childhood partnerships and program development on behalf of Head Start eligible children and families.

Child Care:

- HSSCO contracted with the Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children (NeAEYC) to survey Nebraska Head Start grantees regarding their partnerships with community child care and local school districts. The surveys were completed in December and January and the preliminary results were presented in January at the networking session. Plans for surveys of Head Start child care and school partners are scheduled for the second quarter of 2005.
- The second phase of Head Start partners survey was to conduct partnership surveys of child care and school district partners of Nebraska Head Start Grantees. Surveys were completed in May. The data has been compiled and a synopsis of preliminary results will be presented at the Schools of the 21st Century National Conference in July. Data is being aggregated across partners to identify areas of strength and opportunities for technical assistance.
- The Nebraska HSSCO Director continues to provide input on the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines (See the guidelines at www.nde.state.ne.us/ECH/ECH.html). The infant/toddler guidelines are in their seventh draft. Training modules are being developed in each of the domain areas included in the Early Learning Guidelines. These trainings will be offered to early education and care providers throughout the state.

Children with Disabilities:

- HSSCO staff participated in the Early Childhood Outcomes state level partners meetings June 27th , and 28th. Consultants from the National Early Childhood Outcomes Center met with the planning team to discuss Nebraska's state level

plan. Comparisons between reporting requirements and data needs for multiple early childhood programs continue to be discussed.

- HSSCO and early intervention staff from NDE continue to discuss the implications for Head Start and Early Head Start grantees regarding the Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) that requires mandatory referral to the Early Development Network for substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect.

Education/Professional Development

- HSSCO Director is an active member of the Nebraska Kindergarten Conference planning team. The Conference will be held July 12-14, in Kearney NE. There will be a strand of sessions relating to prekindergarten issues. The focus of the prekindergarten sessions will be transitions/school readiness. HSSCO funds will support the prekindergarten strand. Invitations will go to Head Start programs and their community action agency partners. This conference strand is designed to provide valuable opportunities for Head Start staff and other early childhood education providers to network with kindergarten/elementary teachers and to learn and share effective transition practices across placements for children.
- HSSCO continues to be a resource for the University of Nebraska at Kearney Early Childhood Professional Development Grant (ECPD). This grant is designed to assist Head Start programs access high quality credit bearing classes for staff. The grant includes mentoring for Head Start teachers. Teacher mentor training was held Wednesday, March 9. HSSCO is a member of the ECPD Advisory committee, which will meet in April.

Health:

- The Nebraska HSSCO Director is on the Leadership Team for the Maternal Child Health Early Childhood Systems Integration Project, “Together for Kids and Families” and is the co-chair of the Data Work Group. Several meetings have been held to review potential indicators and outcomes which are being reviewed for the strategic plan (See attached minutes of Leadership Team meeting).
- HSSCO staff attended the Safe Sleep Initiative meeting on June 1st. Participants discussed ways to lower the rate of death for infants in Nebraska
- HSSCO staff will be representing the Department of Education and the Nebraska on the Covering Kids and Families committee. This group works to increase the number of children with health insurance in the state.

Welfare Reform:

- At the request of Head Start directors, HSSCO is facilitating discussions between the Region VII Office and Nebraska TANF and CCDF administrators to clarify Head Start eligibility questions.

Family Literacy:

- Even Start Technical Assistance funds are being used in Regional Training Coalitions to enhance the family literacy training in areas where Even Start programs operate. Head Start programs are active in the Regional Training Coalitions throughout the state and are encouraged to plan with their Even Start partners related to professional development needs.

Homeless Services:

- The Homeless Coordinator for NDE is a new member of the Nebraska Early Childhood Interagency Coordinating Council (ECICC) Gaps and Barriers committee. The Homeless Coordinator provides technical assistance and updates to committee members. HSSCO Director disseminated information to constituents regarding the Homeless Coordinator's report.
- HSSCO provided information regarding the National Homelessness conference to the Nebraska Title I Homeless Coordinator and offered to financially support participation.

Community Services:

- The second Leaders in Partnership for Early Learning Academy (LiPeL) was held April 25-27, 2005 in Kearney, NE. This training opportunity was for staff including fiscal directors at Head Start programs and community action agencies to hone aspects of their administrative skills to learn about ROMA. (Please see attached LiPeL report and work plan status)
- Terry Rohren, working on behalf of HSSCO, has created a draft and completed first round edits for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Head Start and Community Action in Nebraska. The stakeholders review the draft in June in conjunction with the annual Community Action Nebraska conference.

Other:

- Nebraska's HSSCO Director is a member of the Leadership Team for the Early Childhood Policy Study. NDE was directed to complete the study by the

Nebraska State Board of Education. Input from families, Head Start program personnel, child care providers, elementary educators and administrators was solicited. Draft recommendations were completed at the end of December 2004. The State Board of Education accepted the initial draft of the policy report for dissemination and discussion at their January meeting. HSSCO staff was active in recruiting participants for the State Board of Education's Policy Partner Forums that were held throughout the state to discuss and provide further input on the Early Childhood Policy Study.

- Head Start-State Collaboration Office provides ongoing technical assistance to the Nebraska ECICC. HSSCO Director is a member of the Gaps and Barriers Standing Committee. This group works to eliminate barriers for all children (both with and without disabilities) throughout the state.
- HSSCO, in collaboration with the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation, is beginning a study of fatherhood issues in Nebraska Head Start programs. Dr. Joseph White with the Dakota Fatherhood Initiative is conducting the study. First year information will provide baseline data of fatherhood factors in Head Start programs.
- HSSCO Director attended the Head Start Association Board Meeting and Region VII Conference held in Kansas City, May 31 through June 3.